



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/521,618	03/08/2000	Marc Jan Rene Leblans	07619-0005	1556
23377	7590	07/01/2004	EXAMINER	
WOODCOCK WASHBURN LLP ONE LIBERTY PLACE, 46TH FLOOR 1650 MARKET STREET PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103			LUU, THANH X	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2878	

DATE MAILED: 07/01/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application N .

09/521,618

Applicant(s)

LEBLANS ET AL.

Examiner

Thanh X Luu

Art Unit

2878



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 May 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 5,6,21,51 and 52 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 5,6,21,51 and 52 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 08 March 2000 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

This Office Action is in response to amendments and remarks filed May 24, 2004. Claims 5, 6, 21, 51 and 52 are currently pending.

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the autofocusing system in combination with the unfolded microscope system must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

2. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 5, 6 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding claims 5, 6 and 21, it is unclear how the autofocusing system is structurally related to the microscope system. For instance, do the lenses of claim 52

comprise the objective lens and the image lens? Furthermore, an object plane and an image are already mentioned in claim 52; it is unclear how many object planes and how many images are being claimed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

6. Claims 52 and 51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ulrich et al. (U.S. Patent 6,738,189).

Regarding claims 52 and 51, Ulrich et al. disclose (see Fig. 3) a microscope for viewing an object plane, comprising: a plurality of lenses (6, 8) positioned along a main optical axis of the microscope; a probe arm (vertical cross-hatched portion) supporting the plurality of lenses, the probe arm extending generally along the main optical axis; a support (stage; not labeled) on which an object with an object plane to be examined is

placed, the object plane substantially extended along a focus plane that is observed through the microscope; and an optical output device (at 3 or at 12) for creating an image of the object plane on an image plane, wherein the main optical axis is unfolded and substantially extends along a single plane, wherein the probe arm is substantially elongated so that the optical output device is positioned distant from the object to be examined. Ulrich et al. also disclose (see Fig. 3) a scanning stage connected to the support on which the object to be examined is positioned; and the support is separate from the probe arm such that the probe arm and the stage are substantially vibrationally isolated from each other as claimed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 5, 6 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ulrich et al. in view of Sato et al. (U.S. Patent 5,530,237).

Regarding claims 5, 6, and 21, Ulrich et al. disclose the claimed invention as set forth above. Ulrich et al. do not specifically disclose an autofocus system as claimed. Sato et al. teach (see Fig. 1) an apparatus for automatically focusing a microscope comprising, an objective lens (2), an illumination beam source (10) emitting visible light, an imaging lens (3), an autofocus light beam source emitting infrared light (17), a beamsplitter (7), a detection system lens (18), and an autofocus detecting device

comprising, sensor (22), an iris (21) , an auxiliary beam splitter (19), a auxiliary light sensor (20), and a focusing correction system which determines the displacement of the image plane from a preferred reference plane (Col. 5, lines 24-27 and Col. 6, lines 53-59). It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide an autofocus system of Sato et al. in the microscope of Ulrich et al. to improve imaging and optimize focusing.

Response to Arguments

9. Applicant's arguments with respect to the claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thanh X Luu whose telephone number is (571) 272-2441. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (6:30-4:00) First Friday off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Porta can be reached on (571) 272-2444. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic

Application/Control Number: 09/521,618

Page 6

Art Unit: 2878

Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thanh X. Luu', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Thanh X Luu
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2878

06/04